(b) Promotion of export has been the constant endeavour of the Government. Extreme Focus on sectors having high growth potential, facility of conversion of entire export earnings at market rate of exchange, provision of inputs for export production at international prices and exemption of income from export from Income-Tax are some of the important constituents of Government's strategy to step up exports. Specific steps taken to improve the performance of export of electronics items include introduction of liberal value-based advance licensing for electronic industries, Electronic Hardware Technology Park Scheme and reduction of the value addition requirements for computer hardware industry in quantity-based advance licensing.

(c) The liberalisation of baggage rules announced recently is expected to have only marginal effect on the domestic industry, as simultaneously, relief has also been given to the domestic industry by reducing and rationalising excise and custom duties so that Indian electronic industry does not face unfair competition from imports under the baggage rules.

Widening Trade Deficit

3338. SHRI KRISHNA KUMAR BIRLA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that country's trade deficit has widened during the current year;

(b) if so, what is the estimated trade deficit during 1992-93, till-date as compared to the trade deficit in 1991-92;

(c) what are the reasons identified for the unsatisfactory trade performance stating the names of the countries where the country's exports have declined; and

(d) what is the manner in which Government propose to step up exports to minimise the deficit ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) and (b) The trade deficit during April—Jan' 1992-93 amounted to US $ 3596.39 million as compared to US $ 1533.81 million in the corresponding period of 1991-92.

(c) Among the reasons for slow growth in exports mention may be made of rapid fall in trade with CIS and East European countries recession in industrially advanced countries and sluggish growth in world trade. The principal countries in respect of which exports declined during April—November 1992-93, the latest period for which such data are available, are CIS, Romania, Poland, Yugoslavia, Hungary, Japan, Republic of Korea, Belgium and Finland.

(d) In order to boost exports, the Government have taken major steps for liberalisation of trade which include provision of export-linked imports, reduction of import licensing, strengthening export incentives and removal of procedural irritants through simplification of policy and procedures. In 1993-94 Budget, the system of market determined unified exchange rates has been introduced and custome and excise duties have been reduced. Besides, 34 commodities have been identified as "Extreme Focus" sectors aimed at value or volume increase of 30% every year, in exports.

Impact of devaluation and liberalisation on exports

3339. SHRI KRISHAN LAL SHARMA :

Will the Minister of COMMERCE be pleased to state :

(a) whether it is a fact that liberalisation and devaluation of rupee has not brought the desired effect on exports of the country;

(b) if so, what are the handicaps in achieving the desired results; and

(c) what steps are being taken to remove them ?

THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE (SHRI PRANAB MUKHERJEE) : (a) Exports depend on a large number of factors such as availability of surpluses for export, agricultural production, industrial production, availability of credit, inflation rate, domestic demand, domestic policies as also global factors such as global trading environment, economic environment in our trading partner countries, external demand for our products etc. However, it can be said that a deregulated environment in terms of simplification of procedures etc. contributes to faster growth in exports, as compared to a totally regulated export-import regime. The negative rate of growth of exports of 1.5% in dollar terms during 91-92 has been reversed and exports during the year 92-93 have shown signs of revival.

(b) Among the reasons for slow growth in exports mention may be made of rapid fall in trade with CIS and East European countries, recession in industrially advanced countries and sluggish growth in world trade.

(c) In order to boost exports, the Government have taken major steps for liberalisation of trade which include provision of export-linked imports, reduction of import licensing, strengthening export incentives and removal of procedural irritants through simplification of policy and procedures. In the 1993-94 Budget, the system of market determined unified exchange rate has been introduced and customs and excise duties have been reduced. Besides, 34 commodities have been identified as "Extreme Focus" sectors aimed at value or volumes increase of 30% every year, in exports. The Government is also making efforts to ensure that India's trade with the former Rupee Payment Countries is not only maintained but also enhanced in the long run.

Increasing the limit of payment of Bonus

@3340. SHRI PRAVAT KUMAR SAMANTARAY : Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are contemplating the enhancement of payment of bonus from 8.33 per cent and also contemplating to enhance the limit of exgratia payment from Rs. 1600/- to the wage earners; and

(b) if so, what are the details thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI P. A. SANGMA) : (a) No, Sir. There is no proposal to amend the Payment of Bonus Act, 1965.

(b) Does not arise.

बाल श्रमिकों की सामाजिक-आर्थिक दशा

3341. **श्री राम नरेश यादव** : क्या श्रम मंत्री 1 मार्च, 1993 को राज्य सभा में अतारांकित प्रश्न संख्या 763 के दिए गए उत्तर को देखेंगे और यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि :

(क) क्या सरकार देश में बाल श्रमिकों की सामाजिक-आर्थिक दशा के संबंध में कोई नवीन सर्वेक्षण कराने का विचार रखती है; और

(ख) यदि हां, तो यह सर्वेक्षण कब तक कराया जाना संभव होगा ?

श्रम मंत्रालय के राज्य मंत्री (श्री पी. ए. संगमा) : (क) और (ख) नियोजन क्षेत्र के समस्त क्षेत्र को शामिल करने के उद्देश्य से बाल श्रमिकों की सामाजार्थिक दशाओं का व्यापक सर्वेक्षण करवाने का कोई प्रस्ताव नहीं है । तथापि, स्थान और क्षेत्रीय विस्तार के सीमित उद्देश्य से विभिन्न विभागों/संगठनों द्वारा समय-समय पर विशिष्ट

@Previously Unstarred Question 2550, transferred from 16th March, 1993.